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ABSTRACT

This paper examines bilingual early childhood programs in Aotearoa, New Zealand, in Wales, and among the indigenous people of the United States. The first section of the paper describes bicultural programs as programs that promote an acknowledgement of the ways people of each culture live, communicate with one another, and understand their world. A bilingual program is a bicultural program that involves the learning of a minority language. The advantages of bilingual programs in Aotearoa, New Zealand include fostering the Maori people's access to their language and culture, providing individual and societal enrichment, and promoting enhanced academic achievement. The second section of the document outlines the history of Maori educational initiatives. Research that exposes nonegalitarian practices in New Zealand educational policy is cited and Maori attempts to achieve autonomous control over their educational development are described. The third section contains observations on programs within American Indian reservations and in Wales. Only on the Crow reservation around Pryor, Montana, had a program successfully brought about widespread use of the native language. In contrast, Welsh control over educational resources has enabled full implementation of bilingual policies in community schools. The fourth section of the document applies lessons learned from studying American and Welsh bilingual programs to the development of bilingual programs in Aotearoa. A 41-item bibliography is provided. (BC)

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# Indigenous Bilingual EC Programmes in Aotearoa, Wales and the US.

Tony Holmes

E rangatira ma, e nga tangata whenua o Aotearoa tena ra koutou.
E nga hau e wha, tena koutou, tena koutou, kia ora koutou katoa.
Te whakatauki o te hui nei, "Toi te kupu, toi te mana, toi te whenua!"

During 1988 and 1989 I visited early childhood language programmes for indigenes in Wales and the US to compare them with developments in Aotearoa. In looking at early childhood language programmes I have focussed on the under 5's but it is necessary to consider childrens' progress into the primary school to at least age 8 to provide an adequate perspective on language aquisition. By indigeneous I mean those peoples who define themselves as such. That is, Maori in Aotearoa, the Welsh in Wales and Native Americans or American Indians in The US. Firstly, I will define and describe what I mean by a bicultural and a bilingual programme, their desirability and advantages. Secondly, the background leading up to current situation in Aotearoa. Thirdly, what I found out from my visits to Wales and the US. And lastly, what I learnt from these programmes.

## 1. What is a bicultural and a bilingual programme? Why are they desirable? What are their advantages?

Joan Metge defines a bicultural programme as one intended to promote an acknowledgement of the way in which the people of each culture live their lives, communicate with each other and make sense of their world - their system of symbols and meanings, values, behaviour, attitudes and language. (Metge, J, 1980) This was the intention of the Taha Maori programme(Dept of Educ 1984). When the programme involves the learning of the minority language the programme would then become a bilingual one. That is, a bilingual programme would be one intended to promote bilingualism either by the predominant use of a minority group language (immersion or single-medium) or by the use of two languages (or dual-medium) as the media of instruction, i.e. the curriculum is taught through the languages(Holmes, J, 1984). In Aotearoa the kohanga reo are an example of the first type, some primary schools' bilingual classes are examples of the second. Even where the teaching is completely through the minority language the programme is still defined as bilingual because the language of the dominant culture is usually in use before and after school or centre time, during breaks, in the community and maybe at home.

In Aotearoa bilingual programmes are desirable so that all Maori children can learn their language and about their culture. These programmes attempt to address what the Waitangi Tribunal described as the "dismal failure" of the education system in catering for the needs of Maori children (1986). The Maori language is a unique taonga or treasure of a people whose only home is here in Aotearoa. It is the only and essential vehicle for the transmission of Maori values, skills, knowledge, history, poetry and song- in short, the culture. Only te Reo can fully express the Maori way of life, represent and symbolise the culture, and allow the culture to be realised(Fishman,1984).

The beneficial outcomes of extended teaching through the child's native language have been documented by Jim Cummins, a recognised world authority on bilingual education. The longer a child is exposed to, and taught in his/her first language, the greater are his/her chances of high academic achievement, a positive self-image, and cultural security when a second language is introduced. The native language should be used as the principal medium of instruction througout the early childhood and school years, and culturally appropriate content, materials and methods should be used. The second language can then be progressively introduced from around age 7-8 years until it becomes the more widely used language of instruction, but the native language continues to play a major role in the school and the community. Generally speaking, at least 5-6 years are needed to achieve mastery of both languages. ( Cummins, 1982).

These programmes are advantageous not only to Maori children but also to Pakeha and other tauiwi children. This knowledge can enrich us both individually and as a society. We can develop a deeper appreciation and understanding of Maori language and culture, and more positive cross-cultural interpersonal relations. Maybe the disruption and sadness over the claim, or was it theft, of Billy T James body need not have occurred? We would also have greater access to

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literature and other cultural treasures, and it would help in our progress towards a multicultural society.

Children who have sucessfully experienced bilingual programmes can read and communicate in two languages. There is strong evidence from a number of countries that when their bilingualism is valued and regarded positively, these children often surpass the cognitive, creative, and academic achievements of monolingual children, i.e. bilingualism does not impede the aquisition of academic skills, but enhances them.
(Benton,1977, 1989; Cummins, 1981).

So the advantages can be summarised as increased rights of access by Maori to their language and culture-the social justice argument, individual and societal enrichment, and more harmonious cultural relationships, and enhanced academic achievement.

2. The history of subversion of Maori educational initiatives.

This history of Maori education has been one of the denial of Maori rights and educational needs through the subversion of Maori aspirations. Educational policies, many formulated and implemented with the best of intentions, have had disasterous consequencies. Because teachers transmit and legitimate the ideology of the dominant culture to their students, they help determine the way students think, feel, and behave. Traditionally our education system has been seen as having a liberal ideology with egalitarian goals. Equality of opportunity appeared to mean that anyone, whether Maori, Pakeha or other tauiwi, could "get on" with ability and hard work. The longtime hidden class and race divisions, the notion of the classless non-racist society, and the relative affluence of the full-employment economy helped to conceal the true nature of NZ society. Analysis of the deepening economic crisis together with the rise of Maori and women's activism over the last 30 years, has exposed the inherent social contradictions in our society and within our education system. The dominant ideology, although powerful and pervasive, has been challenged and forced to renegotiate in order maintain the consent of those who remain subordinated to Pakeha control.

The so-called "problems" of minority students have been described by Jim Cummins (Cummins, J. and T Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988) as " manifestations of institutionalised racism, ethnicism, classism, and linguicism in society rather than just educators' lack of sensitivity to students' needs." Cummins argues that the power structures in society must be seen as a fundamental causal factor in minority students educational failure, and that the interactions between teachers and minority children reflect this power structure. Strategies for change are therefore futile when when developed from a liberal ideological framework.

This view is supported by Judith Simon (1984) who documented Maori educational policy and its outcomes from 1960 to1980. These polices, although developed to serve Maori interests became ideological in the hands of teachers and administrators, and served instead the interests of the Pakeha in maintaining Pakeha dominance. For example, the integration policy of the Hunn Report(1961) which superceded the long-standing policy of assimilation. The new policy while claiming to support egalitarian principles and to value and preserve Maori culture actually maintained the practice of assimilation. Statistics revealed Maori educational under-achievement, and the Maori child became a "problem." Cultural deprivation, the deficit ideology used to explain this under-achievement, concealed the extent to which the education system caters for Pakeha interests. By focussing on the problem child, for example, through early intervention in the form of increased provision of early childhood education for Maori children, the ideology concealed bias in the system. The concept of cultural deprivation was replaced by cultural difference (NZEI Report, 1967) which shifted the responsibility for under-achievement from the victim(the child) to the school and the education system. In 1974 the Department of Education changed its policy from one of tolerating "cultural difference to the valuing of "cultural diversity'-a multicultural policy-and also said that the responsibility for change was with the Pakeha. Maori language and culture was to be included in the curriculum at all stages. Taha Maori(the Maori perspective) introduced 1984, has also suffered the same fate. It was to be integrated across the total school curriculum, but became just an element within the curriculum. In contrast, Taha Pakeha is the curriculum in the sense that it dominates the whole of centre and school life. These programmes strengthen the Pakeha, because in claiming to fulfil Maori needs, this policy ironically involved itself more with the educaton of Pakeha than with Maori. Like other programmes, its potential to develop Maori self-esteem and cultural pride, and bicultural Pakeha, has been lost. Its failure is a Pakeha responsibility. Maori were not given a

strong role in the decision making process involved in the development or implementation of the policy. All these policies have been ideologically subverted to conceal that we have failed to address Maori-Pakeha power relations.

Maori disenchantment with these Pakeha processes has led to the demand for autonomous control over their own educational development. The first move was the creation of Te Kohanga Reo in 1982. At that time I was working at Kokiri Pukeatua in Wainuiomata with Jean Puketapu where the first kohanga was set up in part of an old clothing factory. This grass roots whanau movement was established with help from the Dept of Maori Affairs but largely built independently of government support. This movement has succeeded in teaching the language and culture to Maori children because it provides a total Maori environment for learning. Te Reo is the medium for education. This initiative was partly spurred on by research which indicated that the language would soon be lost. Since 1982 over 700 kohanga reo have been established by Maori communities and approx.imately 10,000 children currently attend. This compares with the 70-80,000 children in all other early childhood centres. Sadly, most of these children move on to primary schools which have little or no provision for continuing their education in Maori. Most five year old Maori primary school new entrants who are fluent in their native language lose most of what they have learned in the first 6 months at school. When my younger son first went to school he was impressed by his new friend from kohanga who could speak Maori. This child was used as a living language resource in the new entrants class, but lacking support and being the only Maori speaker in the class, his language quickly disappeared. The Te Kohanga Reo Review (Sept 1988) reported that "there is widespread dissatisfaction with schools' inability to provide for the continuation of the kaupapa, and lack of value accorded the Maori langauge and culture." Since 1977 only 11 bilingual schools, around 100 bilingual units and classes in schools and very recently a small number of Kura Kaupapa Maori have been set up to cater for this need. This has resulted in about 5% of Maori children (Benton, 1989) attending schools in which Maori will, or will eventually, have the same status as English.

3. Indigeneous Bilingual Early Childhood Programmes in Wales and the US.

In Australia, North America, Wales, Ireland and in Scotland, English language and Anglo-Celtic culture is dominant, and English is the first language of the majority of the native peoples. Like the Maori in NZ, the colonial history of these indigenous peoples has been one of dishonoured treaties, warfare, land seizures and near cultural genocide. The American Indians and the Australian Aborigines, like the Maori, were expected to die out by the 20th century. Subsequent educational policies in all these lands have been assimilationist, and the use of English in schools was enforced by threat of, and use of, corporal punishment.

From the programmes I saw overseas there is good news and bad. My visits to the Pueblos, Navajo, Moutain Ute and the Lakota Sioux reservations found programmes which were assimilationist in practice. There was no evidence of the successesful programmes supporting Navajo language and culture in reservation Head-Start pre-schools reported in the journals in the late 70s and early 80s (Spolsky, B, 1982). It was only on the Crow reservation around Pryor, Montana where I found most of the children speaking their native language as their first language- around 85% of them. The language is widely used in the home and supported in the pre-schools, the schools and the community. Crow speakers do not defer to English in the presence of non-Crow English speakers. This is a strong measure of self-esteem and the status of the language. But even here in one of the probably few remaining heartlands of Indian culture parents are increasingly using their poor English to teach their children rather than through their own language. This results in poor language skills in both languages.

Now almost all of the EC programs for American Indians are federally funded through the Head-Start program. Although these programs now claim to actively support native cultures and languages-they were initially set up with a deficit ideology to give Indians a "Head-Start" in the Anglo-American education system-in practice the attitudes and behaviour of the majority of teachers I observed (both Anglo and Native American), the inadequate provision of resources, and the structural and financial constraints imposed by Head-Start, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) ensured that these programs remained assimilationist, ie "transitional" to English language usage and Anglo-American culture.

For example, at the Navajo Head-Starts I visited children were assessed using the Head-Start Measures Battery-a series of narrowly focussed tests oriented towards "school learning" and administered by requiring the children to sit for long testing periods. As has been described by

Zigler and Raver in their May1991 article in Young Children those children who have been sucessful in these tests have been those who had been given curricula which matched the tests. This "teaching to the test" is bad enough within one culture but when standardised tests are applied cross-culturally there can be no "right" answers for the children to succeed. I was shown tests which used "The Three Bears and "Little Red Riding Hood" in the language section for Navajo children. Other tests involved perception, maths, science and family and social networks. None appeared to make any concessions to the native culture. Concern over these and similar measures involving the mis-use and cultural inappropriateness of these types of standardised tests has also been expressed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Depts of Education(Hymes 1988). The only conclusion which I could draw is that the tribal identity, and the mana of American Indian children continues to be undermined so that they can be educated for life in Anglo-America.

It is clear that the good intentions of policymakers have most often become discriminatory in practice and in many places continue to destroy native languages and cultures. Part of the tragedy has been that many of the native peoples themselves have rejected or dismissed the importance of maintaining or learning about their own language and culture becuuse they believed that their own and their childrens' future would be best served by learning about the language and culture of the dominant society. Parents wanted their children to learn English and the Anglo way because they saw their life chances improved by this. But at the same time this meant the exclusion of the very nature or essence of these people-their language and culture- from the school and from public life. In the US, without full Indian self-determination I don't see that further decline and loss of American Indian languages and culture can be avoided.

By contrast, in Wales, Welsh control over educational resources has enabled full implementation of bilingual policies in community pre-schools, nursery, primary, and secondary schools, and tertiary institutions. Wales has has made enormous progress in recent times in promoting its language and culture. Although the Welsh were colonised 700 years ago, inequities still remain and many of the people feel that their country is still occupied. For example, outside the Gwynedd County Education Offices there is a slate monolith topped with a sculptured eagle and inscribed with a celtic cross and the words "To the last Prince of Wales, 1282." Opposite is the door of Caernarvon castle with a notice stating that the castle is the property of Her Majesty, the Queen. The dominance of English resulted in a decline in the use of the native language up to the 1960s. Since that time there has been growth mainly due to school and pre-school bilingual programmes.

Welsh speakers are predominantly found in Gwynedd and Dyfed the most northern and western region of the country. In these "heartlands", which can be compared to parts of te Tai Rawhiti/E Cape area and te Tai Tokerau/Northland, more than 60% of the people speak Welsh. In the Anglicised and industrial SE only 10% do.

The first Welsh-medium school was set up in 1939, and the first official school in 1948. The end of the 50s and the early 60s marked the beginning of the rise of Welsh-medium education. These schools follow a similar programme to the Maori bilingual schools. They are predominantly for children with English as their first language. Welsh is the single-medium for teaching in the junior years. English is introduced at age 7, i.e. the programme becomes dual-medium with 40% of the curriculum is taught through English by age 11. Overall there are no adverse effects on achievement in English.

There are also several hundred bilingual schools where Welsh is the medium of instruction for 40-50% of the school day. Again there have been no adverse cognitive or linguistic effects compared to monolingual English curriculum control groups, but for these children the level of Welsh attained was lower than that in the Welsh-medium schools.

In Wales, as in the rest of Britain, many children attend Nursery Classes or Schools from 3 or 4 years old. Some Nursery groups are Welsh-medium, some have teaching in Welsh. But the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin (MYM) /Welsh-medium Nursery Schools and Playgroups Association is the dynamic force in Welsh-medium pre-school education. These are Welsh immersion programmes for children whose first language is English(only 5-10 groups out of over 400 are in communities where Welsh is the children's first language) All the teachers are fluent Welsh speakers. Between 1944(The Education Act) and 1965 Welsh-medium preschool education

was wholly voluntary, and provision extremely fragmented and confined to industrial S Wales and Mon/Angelsey. The increased status of Welsh-medium education in the late 60s resulted in over 70 groups by 1970. In 1971 these groups united to become Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin. Welsh Office (ie government) funding has been provided since 1975 and by 1985 there were 433 schools, and 199 parent-toddler groups catering for nearly 6,000 children. From these figures you can see that the Kohanga has grown at a phenomenal rate since 1982, faster than the Ysgolian Meithrin, but the difference is that in Wales children can continue their Welsh education in bilingual schools.

In Wales the most significant developments which have relevance to the NZ situation can be summarised as:

1. Welsh language is available in all schools(i.e. from age 3 in nursery classes). Welsh is part of the new National Curriculum and every school child will receive some teaching in Welsh.

2. Establishment of Language Centres for English speaking immigrants. These centres provide immersion in Welsh for children from age 7-11(4-6 year olds go straight into school) for a short period of intense language instruction to enable them to integrate into the life of the local Welsh school and community. This also prevents these new children from undermining the language programme with too much English usage. The centres are well resourced, with specialist language teachers, a generous teacher-student ratio(1:10) and small groups. This sort of exposure to a second language is a most effective method to aquire Welsh. Progress is rapid and the children move to the local school after only one term competent and confident enough in their new language to cope in the classroom.
3. Growth of government support for Mudiad Ysgolian Meithrin-
Welsh-medium pre-school language nests.

4.Financial incentives for students and teachers being trained through the medium of Welsh.

5.Welsh used as the language of examinations.
Welsh is one of the languages of examinations. There is a Welsh Examinations Board. In 1985, 34 "O" level subjects, 37 CSE options and 16 "A" level choices were sat by more than 7,000 students. (TLS, p 3, 23.1.85)

6.Extensive publishing in Welsh-children's books, novels, and textbooks through the Welsh Books Council (350-400 books each year, about 100 of which are childrens books) and The Welsh Joint Education Committee(40-50 textbooks each year) A highly efficient cooordinated system from schools' orders through publishing runs to delivery to schools ensures that print needs are met.

7. Extensive "prime-time" TV and radio in Welsh.
Welsh is prominent in the media, in Welsh-language feature films, and TV films-one or two have made it to NZ. There is also TV and radio news, childrens' programmes, schools programmes, and further education programmes, including about 4 hrs "prime time" TV from 6-10 pm each day.

8. Parents desire for their children to learn Welsh, and learn through Welsh. Welsh parents have seen the positive effects of bilingual education, and are no longer fearful about the effects on their children's educational achievement. They are convinced of the benefits of a bilingual education for their children.

4. What can we learn from these programmes in Wales and the US?

In Aotearoa we have a number of advantages which make our bicultural goals more easily attainable than in many other parts of the world. We have two flourishing major cultures. The cultures of many other colonised peoples have been so decimated that they are unlikely to survive. Maori have tribal cultures and language dialects that are mutually intelligible- there is one Maori language. In other countries there are often many different indigenous languages. For example, this contrast is clear in comparing Wales and Aotearoa (1 language ) with the American Indians and the Australian Aboriginals(100's of tribes and languages).

Now this is good news for the maintainance of the language, and in terms of the production of resources, but unless the programmes serve the true interests of the minority group, and are

perceived in that way by the indigeneous community themselves-not those of the majority as perceived by majority group educaters, as has mainly been the case up to the present, they have little chance of success. And they must be backed up by adequate resources to see them through. (Look at the Welsh resources just described.)

This brings us back to the question of social justice and to the Treaty of Waitangi. Because Maori and the Crown are unable to agree on the rights conferred in Articles 1 and 2 of the Treaty they are unable to agree on the fair allocation of educational and other resources. Maori claim that in 1840 they had agreed to a partnership with a Pakeha minority which retained Maori sovereignty and possession of their taonga. Since that time Pakeha have become the majority and have used their democratic power and force of law to alienate Maori from their language, their culture, and their land.

From the Welsh experience it is clear that real progress is possible by providing for Maori control of their own educational resources. In the US and in NZ bilingual/bicultural educational initiatives have been constrained and undermined by successive governments and their agents. Te Kohanga Reo has challenged all of us to provide for the needs of Maori children beyond early childhood and into primary education and beyond.

For the small number of children from homes where the first language is Maori, and for Kohanga Reo children, the most effective school education is through the medium of Maori language. (Benton, R, 1988) Following kohanga reo, it is imperative that bilingual primary programmes are available to at least Std 3, or about age 8, if these children are not to lose their knowledge and proficiency in the langauge, and have their self-esteem and academic potential diminished.

To achieve these goals substantial additional numbers of primary schools would have to set up bilingual units, or Maori communities would have to establish more Kura Kaupapa Maori. What is clear is that the alternative of submersion back into a totally English environment after Kohange Reo-which is what happens to most of these children- actually places these children at greater risk. They have built up strengths in Maori and now find themselves in an environment where their Maori is suppressed. The negative effects on achievement and cognitive growth are compounded. The transition to, or back to, English results in assimilation to English monolingualism. Many of the American Indian programmes demonstrate this.

Our own government is clearly non-supportive. The latest draft curriculum document (Draft National Curriculum of NZ-a Discussion Document, MoE 1991) no longer refers to the Treaty or to partnership. The Charter Treaty requirement has now been removed, and, although many centres and schools are still honouring their charter, this move has made it easy for others to abandon the Treaty. Schools are expected to "provide" for Maori language teaching but gone is the "committment" to integrate tikanga Maori across the curriculum. The curriculum itself has been displaced and narrowed to accommodate a science/technology bias which will ease the introduction of standardised testing and which at the same time further marginalises the arts and the teaching of Maori language and culture. This will certainly adversely affect bicultural goals and programmes. How long will it be before the early childhood curriculum comes under the spotlight.? Up to now early childhood centres have retained autonomy over their curriculum. We are now vulnerable. Could early childhood end up with a narrow curriculum and teach to the test like the Head-Start Measures Batteries? Michael Apple, a visiting US professor of education, warned us about becoming, "a tool of conservative politics" back in 1983. In 1991, Apple's concerns are beginning to be realised.

As well as these constraints the setting up of language units within primary schools is fraught with additional difficulties. With the government's intention to fund schools at a minimum level there won't be sufficient funds to support existing programmes, and I believe that not many schools will choose to spend on a Maori language programme. Even though the language programme could be justified on equity grounds (i.e. biculturalism in education is concerned with the rights of access to educational resources. It is a Treaty issue and a principal equity issue in education) it would be at the expense of other programmes within the school. Couple this with de-zoning and there exists the possibility of "white flight" where parents may choose another school which doesn't "waste" its resources on "that Maori stuff!" This could have serious consequencies for the viability of schools.

So although Picot suggested that Maori would "have considerably more scope" to influence education through the creation of charters which reflect their needs," in practice this has not

happened. The democratic process has defeated, and will continue to defeat, minority Maori interests, and frustrate the working out of the Treaty partnership. I think that the only viable and certain means of meeting Maori aspirations for the teaching and maintainace of te reo and te tikanga is through institutions with a Maori pedagogy or kaupapa Maori, that is Te Kohanga Reo followed by Kura Kaupapa. With our support Maori will overcome the structural and financial constraints imposed on them by government, and will not suffer from prejudicial attitudes, and the discriminatory treatment which has been well documented by researchers like Judith Simon, Alison St George, Courtney Cazden and Marie Clay.

Our role is to firstly find out how best to support Maori self-determination in education, so that as Wally Penetito has said, "Maori children can repossess their own language and custom by relearning on their own terms what it is that belongs to them." Secondly, to take responsibility in working for a bicultural education system, including bicultural programmes in our own centres and schools. Maori are, after all, already bicultural, some are bilingual. Pakeha and other tauiwi are the ones who need to become bi- or tri-cultural. And, thirdly, to be advocates for a bicultural Aotearoa by working with parents, policy makers and politicians.

No reira, kia mau, kia u, kia kaha ra, ki nga tikanga rua o Aotearoa.
Tena ra koutou katoa.

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